

Whereas, under the cover of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, on June 17, 1940, Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania were forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Union in violation of pre-existing peace treaties;

Whereas the Soviet Union imposed upon the people of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania a communist political system that stifled civil dissent, free political expression, and basic human rights;

Whereas the United States never recognized this illegal and forcible occupation, and successive United States presidents maintained continuous diplomatic relations with these countries throughout the Soviet occupation, never accepting them to be "Soviet Republics";

Whereas, during the 50 years of Soviet occupation of the Baltic states, Congress strongly, consistently, and on a bipartisan basis supported a United States policy of legal non-recognition;

Whereas, in 1953, the congressionally-established Kersten Commission investigated the incorporation of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania into the Soviet Union and determined that the Soviet Union had illegally and forcibly occupied and annexed the Baltic countries;

Whereas, in 1982, and for the next nine years until the Baltic countries regained their independence, Congress annually adopted a Baltic Freedom Day resolution denouncing the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and appealing for the freedom of the Baltic countries;

Whereas, in 1991, Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania regained their de facto independence and were quickly recognized by the United States and by almost every other country in the world, including the Soviet Union;

Whereas, in 1998, the United States and the three Baltic nations signed the U.S.-Baltic Charter of Partnership, an expression of the importance of the Baltic Sea region to United States interests;

Whereas the 109th Congress resolved (S. Con. Res. 35 and H. Res. 28) that "it is the sense of Congress that the Government of the Russian Federation should issue a clear and unambiguous statement of admission and condemnation of the illegal occupation and annexation by the Soviet Union from 1940 to 1991 of the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the consequences of which will be a significant increase in good will among the affected people";

Whereas Latvia has successfully developed as a free and democratic country, ensured the rule of law, and developed a free market economy;

Whereas the Government of Latvia has constantly pursued a course of integration of that country into the community of free and democratic nations, becoming a full and responsible member of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the European Union, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization;

Whereas the people of Latvia cherish the principles of political freedom, human rights, and independence; and

Whereas Latvia is a strong and loyal ally of the United States, and the people of Latvia share common values with the people of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress—

(1) congratulates the people of Latvia on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of that country's November 18, 1918, declaration of independence;

(2) commends the Government of Latvia for its success in implementing political and economic reforms, for establishing political, religious and economic freedom, and for its

strong commitment to human and civil rights;

(3) recognizes the common goals and shared values of the people of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, the close and friendly relations and ties of the three Baltic countries with one other, and their tragic history in the last century under the Nazi and Soviet occupations;

(4) calls on the President to issue a proclamation congratulating the people of Latvia on the 90th anniversary of the declaration of Latvia's independence on November 18, 1918;

(5) respectfully requests the President to congratulate the Government of Latvia for its commitment to democracy, a free market economy, human rights, the rule of law, participation in a wide range of international structures, and security cooperation with the United States Government; and

(6) calls on the President and Secretary of State to urge the Government of the Russian Federation to acknowledge that the Soviet occupation of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania under the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and for the succeeding 51 years was illegal.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce a bill with my distinguished colleague, the senior Senator from Illinois, commemorating the 90th anniversary of Latvia's independence.

This past century saw more than its share of tragedy, as the twin evils of fascism and communism seeded mankind with misery unknown to earlier generations. Nazi and Soviet totalitarianism did their best to stamp out the individualistic spirit among their adherents, and forge them instead into a single mailed fist suited only for war, plunder, and oppression. Though the struggle against both was long and often dark, rays of light continually pierced the clouds. One such ray was the establishment of Israel, whose 60th anniversary we are commemorating this year. Another was the independence, sporadic though it began, of independent Baltic republics like Latvia. The modern state of Latvia was born in days of hope after the calamity of the Great War, days when so many of the subjugated peoples of Europe achieved independence. On November 18, 1918, Latvia became free. The U.S. recognized Latvia less than 4 years later.

It is both Latvia's blessing and its curse to sit on a historical crossroads. The Baltic region has been an important trading hub for hundreds of years, stretching back to the days of Vikings and Byzantium. Latvians, surrounded by powerful neighbors and wealthy trading states, have thus led a perilous existence. Tragically, but not fatally, Latvia's post-1918 existence was to be similarly perilous. Through a secret protocol with the Nazis, the U.S.S.R. occupied Latvia in the beginning of World War II, and retained control until the final collapse of the Soviet state in 1991. At that moment, ravished by communism and beset by historical injustice, Latvians made a bold choice to build a free, democratic, and prosperous Western-oriented society. They have since succeeded brilliantly, achieving high levels of economic and political freedom, and enjoying one of the highest living standards among ex-

communist countries. Latvia today stands as a model of Western, free-market democracy, and America stands with it.

I am very proud that Latvia is no longer in peril. It is a valuable member of NATO, and leads a new wave of pro-growth nations in the European Union. I am honored to introduce this resolution with Senator DURBIN, and commend Latvia on its 90th anniversary of independence.

NOTICE OF HEARING

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL
RESOURCES

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public an addition to a previously announced hearing before the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Subcommittee on National Parks.

The hearing will be held on June 17, 2008, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

In addition to the other measures previously announced, the subcommittee will also consider S. 3096, a bill to amend the National Cave and Karst Research Institute Act of 1998 to authorize appropriations for the National Cave and Karst Research Institute.

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record should send it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510-6150, or by email to rachel.pasternack@energy.senate.gov.

For further information, please contact David Brooks at (202) 224-9863 or Rachel Pasternack at (202) 224-0883.

SIGNING AUTHORIZATION

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the majority leader, Senator REID of Nevada, be authorized to sign duly enrolled bills and joint resolutions through June 16, 2008.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, JUNE 10, 2008

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow, Tuesday, June 10; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate then resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 3044, the Consumer-First Energy Act; that there be 1 hour for debate prior to the cloture vote, equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the final 20 minutes equally divided between the two leaders or

their designees, with the majority leader controlling the final 10 minutes prior to the cloture vote on the motion to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, tomorrow Senators should expect that the first rollcall vote will begin shortly after 11 a.m. and that vote will be on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to the Consumer-First Energy Act.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator BAUCUS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BAUCUS. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ENERGY PACKAGE WITH EXTENDERS

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, last Friday a cloture motion was filed on H.R.

6049, the Renewable Energy Job Creation Act of 2008. This bill contains a robust energy package, with about \$17 billion in incentives for alternative energy, for efficiency, and for clean coal. This package is important for our environment, for energy security, and to facilitate the transition to a carbon-controlled economy.

It extends expiring individual provisions. These include the teacher expense deduction and the qualified tuition deduction. The bill also extends expiring business provisions. These include the research and development tax credit and the active finance expensing provision. These business provisions help keep America competitive in the global economy. These business provisions help maintain and create jobs. If these individual and business provisions are not extended, millions of families and businesses would have a huge tax increase. This is all paid for with two revenue raisers that no one has a problem with, revenue raisers that are sound tax policy.

Some might argue we should not increase taxes to pay for tax cuts, but these revenue raisers are not tax increases. The first provision is an extension of the effective date of the worldwide allocation of interest, delaying application of that provision. This section of the code is scheduled to take effect for tax years beginning after December 31, 2008. Many of the companies that will benefit from this provision have told me they would rather have business extenders, including R&D, active financing, and CFC look through, in exchange for a delayed application of the worldwide allocation of interest. These companies realize that in order to get extenders done now, they, along with the Congress, must pay for these provisions. These companies have made a choice. I believe it is a sound choice.

The second provision is offshore deferred compensation. This provision prevents hedge fund managers from deferring income. This is not an increase in tax on hedge fund managers; rather, it is a change in the timing of when in-

come tax will be applied. This is a timing issue, not a tax increase, and the proposal is sound tax policy. Some argue we should not pay to extend current tax benefits. This is a new one. When the other side was in the majority, several bills passed extending provisions, and they were paid for.

So this week the Senate is faced with a choice, a choice that, in my opinion, is relatively easy. We need to decide whether we will develop new jobs and new medications or we can continue to allow hedge fund managers to defer without limitation their compensation for investing other people's money. I believe the choice is easy. We must pass this package of expiring provisions.

I also believe the substitute I will offer will include fixing the AMT, taxes American taxpayers would otherwise have to pay—a so-called AMT patch. That prevents Americans from having to increase their tax liability in a way which I think would not be fair. As I said earlier, the extenders package will be paid for. The AMT patch will not be paid for. Why, some might ask. That is basically because I think it is important to recognize the reality that at the end of day, it will not be paid for, so I, therefore, believe it is important to include the AMT patch in something that is going to be fixed. It is not going to be paid for at the end; whereas, other provisions will be. That is the reason for including both in this bill. The extenders paid for, the AMT patch not paid for.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:39 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, June 10, 2008, at 10 a.m.